

V. REMARKS

Claims 1, 4-6 and 8-16 are rejected under 35 USC 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Muir et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2005/0192090) and further in view of Uchiyama et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,638,165). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Muir teaches a gaming machine display which includes a game playing arrangement mountable in a cabinet of a gaming machine and an electronically controlled display element overlying the game playing arrangement. The game playing arrangement is visible through the display element, when in use, depending on a state of the display element. The game playing arrangement includes a mechanical, symbol carrying arrangement. The symbol carrying arrangement has a set of rotatable mechanical reels with a plurality of symbols being arranged on an outer periphery of each reel. The display element has a display screen overlying the game playing arrangement. The display screen is a multi-layered structure in which the structure includes a monitor on which images are to be displayed. The monitor overlies a shutter mechanism. The shutter mechanism is an electronically controlled device that is controllable to vary between a transparent state, in which the game playing arrangement is visible through the device, and an at least partially opaque state, in which the game playing arrangement is at least partially occluded. A monitor housing defines a plurality of openings with one opening being associated with each reel and a part of the outer periphery of each reel is visible through its associated opening. The electronically controlled device defines a plurality of zones with each zone, in use, overlying one of the reels and each zone is controllable to vary between the transparent state, in which the associated reel is visible through that zone and an at least partially opaque state, in which said reel is at least partially occluded.

Uchiyama teaches a virtual image/real image superimposing and displaying apparatus that displays a virtual image and an actual substance. The virtual

image/real image superimposing and displaying apparatus includes an image display for displaying an image which is a original of the virtual image, a half mirror which forms the virtual image on the basis of the image displayed by the image display and a junction section. The junction section enables movement of the actual substance from a back side of the virtual image to a front side of the virtual image so as to penetrate therethrough. The actual substance becomes visible only when the actual substance is moved to a front side of the virtual image.

(1) Claim 1

The distinguishing features of claim 1 lie in the third wherein clause and fourth wherein clause. The feature of the third wherein clause is that each window frame has an inner periphery and an outer periphery, and an area between the two peripheries is defined as a window frame display area, and a symbol display part is surrounded by a respective inner periphery which is contiguous to the symbol display part (the feature specified here is hereinafter referred to as the first point).

Also, the feature of the fourth wherein clause is that when the display mode of the window frame display area is changed, the illumination device is adapted not to illuminate the symbol corresponding to the symbol display area and a light transmittance rate of the symbol display area is made low (the feature specified here is hereinafter referred to as the second point).

The Examiner evaluates in page 2 of the action paper, with respect to the first point as above mentioned:

"Further, Muir discloses a second display device that has symbol display areas that correspond to the symbol display parts through which the symbols displayed on the first display device are transmittably displayed and the window frames, each respective one of the window frames having an inner periphery to define a window frame area therebetween, each respective one of the window frames surrounding a respective one of the symbol display parts with a respective inner

periphery being contiguous to a respective symbol display part and wherein the display mode of the window frame display area is changed (see element [78, 60, 68] of Fig. 8 and the related description thereof)..."

Here, in the disclosure of Muir, the openings 64 formed on the monitor housing 60 respectively constitute a window frame, and the inner border of each opening 64 forms an inner periphery. There exists, however, no outer periphery. Accordingly, no window frame display area is defined therein.

Also, even though each of the openings 64 is surrounding each reel 18 at symbol carrying arrangement 16, as far as no window frame display area exists as above mentioned, the display mode of the window frame display area is never changed. This is also apparent by the fact that the window frame is made only by the opening 64.

Incidentally, the zones 78 in the shutter mechanism 76 include nematic curvilinear aligned liquid crystals, and are electrically made transparent or opaque to function as a shutter. Such zones 78 are formed to be the same size of the openings 64, and in this regard, it can again be said that Muir fails to disclose or suggest the window frame display area having an inner periphery and an outer periphery.

In addition, the Examiner cites Uchiyama with respect to the first point:

"Uchiyama teaches that the video display device is capable of displaying light transmitting symbols and objects that can variably move about the screen including those of the window frames in the gaming machine (see col. 12: ln 21 ~ col. 13: ln 40)."

This assertion is basically correct though the definition of "window frames" is not specific.

Further, the Examiner asserts:

"Additionally, Uchiyama teaches a gaming device that incorporates window frames in the display apparatus that has inner periphery and outer periphery disposed around and apart from the inner peripheral to define the window frame display area so that the two display appear to interact with one another (see Figs. 6-7 and the related description thereof)."

However, in the figures and the related description that the Examiner has indicated to see, there can not be found any disclosures or suggestions with respect to a window frame having an inner periphery and an outer periphery. This assertion of the Examiner has to be concluded being a bit too harsh.

The Examiner further argues with respect to the above-mentioned second point, following the above:

" ..., the illumination device is adapted not to illuminate the symbol corresponding to the symbol display area and a light transmittance rate of the symbol display area is made low (see paragraph [0011-0015, 0018-0027]."

Here, even though [0023] reads *"Multi-layered structure may include an illuminating layer operatively arranged relative to the monitor to illuminate the monitor"*, these paragraphs do not disclose or suggest any feature of the second point.

In view of the foregoing discussion, it can hardly be said that Muir or Uchiyama, alone or in combination, discloses or suggests the first point and the second point recited in claim 1. Accordingly, the evaluation on claim 1 by the Examiner is improper, and claim 1 is allowable over the applied art.

(2) Claim 6

The distinguishing features of claim 6 lie in the third wherein clause and fifth wherein clause. The feature of the third wherein clause is that each window frame has an inner periphery and an outer periphery, and an area between the two peripheries is defined as a window frame display area, and a symbol display part is surrounded by a respective inner periphery which is contiguous to the symbol display part (the first point).

The feature of the fifth wherein clause is that the display mode of a window frame area changes from the first display mode to the second display mode when the beneficial state is generated, in the first display mode the window frame area is depicted only as a frame structure and in the second display mode, a moving image is superimposed on and moving along the frame structure (the feature specified here is hereinafter referred to as the third point).

Incidentally, the fourth wherein clause describes that the window frame display area has a first display mode and a second display mode. The fourth wherein clause has no particular limitations for each of the display modes, and is irrelevant to the patentability of the present application.

The evaluation on the first point by the Examiner is the same as in the case of claim 1. As above mentioned, Muir or Uchiyama, alone or in combination, fails to disclose or suggest the first point.

As to the third point, the Examiner evaluates:

"However, Muir is silent with respect to a display of moving object image so as to move along each of the window frame. "

In addition, it is quite apparent that Uchiyama is also silent with respect to the third point.

In view of the foregoing discussion, it can hardly be said that Muir or Uchiyama, alone or in combination, discloses or suggests the first point and the third point

recited in claim 6. Accordingly, the evaluation on claim 6 by the Examiner is improper, and claim 6 is allowable over the applied art.

(3) Claim 8

The distinguishing features of claim 8 lie in the third wherein clause and fourth wherein clause. The feature of the first half of the third wherein clause is that "one window frame is surrounded by the effect display area, and one symbol display area is surrounded by one window frame, and through one symbol display area corresponding to one symbol display part, symbols displayed on the first display device are transmittably displayed", which is a well-known art. The key feature of the third wherein clause is that each window frame has an inner periphery and an outer periphery, and an area between the two peripheries is defined as a window frame display area, and a symbol display part is surrounded by a respective inner periphery which is contiguous to the symbol display part (the first point).

Also, the feature of the fourth wherein clause is that when the display mode of the window frame display area is changed, the illumination device is adapted not to illuminate the symbol corresponding to the symbol display area and a light transmittance rate of the symbol display area is made low (the second point).

The evaluation on the first point and the second point by the Examiner is the same as in the case of claim 1. As above mentioned, Muir or Uchiyama, alone or in combination, fails to disclose or suggest the both points.

In view of the foregoing discussion, it can hardly be said that Muir or Uchiyama, alone or in combination, discloses or suggests the first point and the second point recited in claim 8. Accordingly, the evaluation on claim 8 by the Examiner is improper, and claim 8 is allowable over the applied art.

(4) Claim 11

The distinguishing features of claim 11 lie in the third wherein clause and fifth wherein clause. The feature of the first half of the third wherein clause is that "one window frame is surrounded by the effect display area, and one symbol display area is surrounded by one window frame, and through one symbol display area corresponding to one symbol display part, symbols displayed on the first display device are transmittably displayed", which is a well-known art. The key feature of the third wherein clause is that each window frame has an inner periphery and an outer periphery, and an area between the two peripheries is defined as a window frame display area, and a symbol display part is surrounded by a respective inner periphery which is contiguous to the symbol display part (the first point).

The feature of the fifth wherein clause is that the display mode of a window frame area changes from the first display mode to the second display mode when the beneficial state is generated, in the first display mode the window frame area is depicted only as a frame structure and in the second display mode, a moving image is superimposed on and moving along the frame structure (the third point).

Incidentally, the fourth wherein clause describes that the window frame display area has a first display mode and a second display mode. The fourth wherein clause has no particular limitations for each of the display modes, and is irrelevant to the patentability of the present application.

The evaluation on the first point by the Examiner is the same as in the case of claim 1. As above mentioned, Muir or Uchiyama, alone or in combination, fails to disclose or suggest the first point.

As to the third point, the Examiner evaluates:

"However, Muir is silent with respect to a display of moving object image so as to move along each of the window frame. "

In addition, it is quite apparent that Uchiyama is also silent with respect to the third point.

In view of the foregoing discussion, it can hardly be said that Muir or Uchiyama, alone or in combination, discloses or suggests the first point and the third point recited in claim 11. Accordingly, the evaluation on claim 11 by the Examiner is improper, and claim 11 is allowable over the applied art.

(5) Claim 12

The distinguishing features of claim 12 lie in the third wherein clause and fourth wherein clause. The feature of the third wherein clause is that each window frame has an inner periphery and an outer periphery, and an area between the two peripheries is defined as a window frame display area, and a symbol display part is surrounded by a respective inner periphery which is contiguous to the symbol display part (the first point).

Also, the feature of the fourth wherein clause lies in that the liquid crystal display device changes a color of the window frame display area so as to correspond to a specific combination and enlarge the window frame display area not to overlap with the symbol display area, at the same time the specific winning combination is determined as the internal winning combination (the feature specified here is hereinafter referred to as the fourth point).

The evaluation on the first point by the Examiner is the same as in the case of claim 1. As above mentioned, Muir or Uchiyama, alone or in combination, fails to disclose or suggest the first point.

The Examiner does not indicate anything with respect to the fourth point. It is quite apparent that Muir or Uchiyama, alone or in combination, fails to disclose or suggest the feature of "changing a color of the window frame display area so as to correspond to a specific combination and enlarging the window frame display area not to overlap with the symbol display area" in the fourth point.

In view of the foregoing discussion, it can hardly be said that Muir or Uchiyama, alone or in combination, discloses or suggests the first point and the fourth point

recited in claim 12. Accordingly, the evaluation on claim 12 by the Examiner is improper, and claim 12 is allowable over the applied art.

(6) Claim 13

The distinguishing features of claim 13 lie in the fourth wherein clause. The feature of the fourth wherein clause is that each window frame has an inner periphery and an outer periphery, and an area between the two peripheries is defined as a window frame display area, and a symbol display part is surrounded by a respective inner periphery which is contiguous to the symbol display part (the first point).

The evaluation on the first point by the Examiner is the same as in the case of claim 1. As above mentioned, Muir or Uchiyama, alone or in combination, fails to disclose or suggest the first point.

In view of the foregoing discussion, it can hardly be said that Muir or Uchiyama, alone or in combination, discloses or suggests the first point and the second point recited in claim 13. Accordingly, the evaluation on claim 13 by the Examiner is improper, and claim 13 is allowable over the applied art.

(7) Claim 14

One of the distinguishing features of claim 14 lies in the description of the liquid crystal display, that each window frame has an inner periphery and an outer periphery, and a reel is surrounded by a respective inner periphery which is contiguous to the reel (the first point). Also, another feature which corresponds to function (d) in the description with respect to the processor lies in the point of changing a color of the window frame display area so as to correspond to a specific combination and enlarge the window frame display area not to overlap with the symbol display area (the fourth point).

The evaluation on the first point by the Examiner is the same as in the case of claim 1. As above mentioned, Muir or Uchiyama, alone or in combination, fails to disclose or suggest the first point.

The Examiner does not indicate anything with respect to the fourth point. It is quite apparent that Muir or Uchiyama, alone or in combination, fails to disclose or suggest the feature of "changing a color of the window frame display area so as to correspond to a specific combination and enlarging the window frame display area not to overlap with the symbol display area" in the fourth point.

In view of the foregoing discussion, it can hardly be said that Muir or Uchiyama, alone or in combination, discloses or suggests the first point and the second point recited in claim 14. Accordingly, the evaluation on claim 14 by the Examiner is improper, and claim 14 is allowable over the applied art.

(8) Claim 15

One of the distinguishing features of claim 15 lies in the description of the liquid crystal display, that each window frame has an inner periphery and an outer periphery, and a reel is surrounded by a respective inner' periphery which is contiguous to the reel (the first point). Also, another feature which corresponds to function (d) in the description with respect to the processor lies in the point of changing light transmittance of a center part the symbol display area so as to become high so that the symbols of the reel are easily seen through the symbol display area of the liquid crystal display device, and changing the light transmittance of the symbol display area so as to become low in a peripheral part so that the symbols of the reel are not easily seen through the symbol display area of the liquid crystal display device (the feature specified here is hereinafter referred to as the fifth point).

The evaluation on the first point by the Examiner is the same as in the case of claim 1. As above mentioned, Muir or Uchiyama, alone or in combination, fails to disclose or suggest the first point.

The Examiner does not indicate anything with respect to the fifth point. It is quite apparent that Muir or Uchiyama, alone or in combination, fails to disclose or suggest the feature of "changing light transmittance of a center part the symbol display area so as to become high so that the symbols of the reel are easily seen through the symbol display area of the liquid crystal display device, and changing the light transmittance of the symbol display area so as to become low in a peripheral part so that the symbols of the reel are not easily seen through the symbol display area of the liquid crystal display device" in the fifth point.

In view of the foregoing discussion, it can hardly be said that Muir or Uchiyama, alone or in combination, discloses or suggests the first point and the fifth point recited in claim 15. Accordingly, the evaluation on claim 15 by the Examiner is improper, and claim 15 is allowable over the applied art.

(9) Claim 16

One of the distinguishing features of claim 16 lies in the description of the liquid crystal display, that each window frame has an inner periphery and an outer periphery, and a reel is surrounded by a respective inner periphery which is contiguous to the reel (the first point). Also, another feature which corresponds to function (d) in the description with respect to the processor lies in the point of displaying a moving object image so as to move along each window frame (the third point).

The evaluation on the first point by the Examiner is the same as in the case of claim 1. As above mentioned, Muir or Uchiyama, alone or in combination, fails to disclose or suggest the first point.

As to the third point, the Examiner evaluates:

"However, Muir is silent with respect to a display of moving object image so as to move along each of the window frame. "

In addition, it is quite apparent that Uchiyama is also silent with respect to the third point.

In view of the foregoing discussion, it can hardly be said that Muir or Uchiyama, alone or in combination, discloses or suggests the first point and the third point recited in claim 16. Accordingly, the evaluation on claim 16 by the Examiner is improper, and claim 16 is allowable over the applied art.

Claims 4 and 5 depend from claim 1 and include all of the features of claim 1. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims are allowable at least for the reason claim 1 is allowable as well as for the features they recite.

Claims 9 and 10 depend from claim 8 and include all of the features of claim 8. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims are allowable at least for the reason claim 8 is allowable as well as for the features they recite.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Newly-added claims 17 and 18 also include features not shown in the applied art.

It is respectfully submitted that the pending claims are believed to be in condition for allowance over the prior art of record. Therefore, this Amendment is believed to be a complete response to the outstanding Office Action. Further, Applicants assert that there are also reasons other than those set forth above why the pending claims are patentable. Applicants hereby reserve the right to set forth further arguments and remarks supporting the patentability of their claims, including the separate patentability of the dependent claims not explicitly addressed herein, in future papers.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the application and allowance of

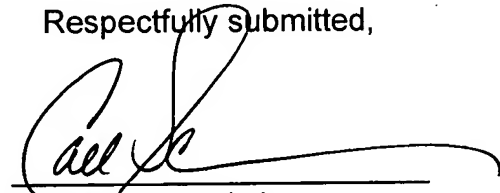
the pending claims are respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative at the telephone number listed below.

Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper or if a Petition for Extension of Time is required for timely acceptance of the same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 18-0013 for any such fees and Applicant(s) hereby petition for such extension of time.

Respectfully submitted,

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